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Economic and Social Council

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Agenda item 5
Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice President of the Council, Mr. Jassim Mohammed Buallay (Bahrain), on the basis of informal consultations

Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and recalling that humanitarian assistance should be provided in accordance with and with due respect for the guiding principles contained in the ann x to that resolution, and also recalling other relevant Assembly resolutions,

Recalling its agreed conclusions 1998/1 of 17 July 1998[1] and 1999/1 of 23 July 1999,[2]

Emphasizing the importance of the discussion of humanitarian policies and activities in the Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming the need for the Council to continue to consider ways to further enhance the humanitarian affairs segment of future substantive sessions of the Council,

Welcoming the fact that the 2002 humanitarian affairs segment considered the theme "Strengthening of the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance in cases of natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies, with particular attention to reaching the vulnerable and the transition from relief to development",

Deeply concerned about alleged sexual abuse, exploitation and misuse of humanitarian assistance by personnel involved in humanitarian assistance activities and stressing the need for appropriate measures in this regard,

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[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/53/3 and Corr.1 and Add.1), chap. VII, para. 5.

[2] Ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/54/3/Rev.1), chap. VI, para. 5.

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Encouraging the direct participation of local communities and populations in the identification and implementation of humanitarian and transitional programmes, with a view to supporting overall peace-building, reconciliation, reconstruction and development efforts,

Stressing the need to address the funding and strategic planning gap between relief and development activities in the context of natural disasters and complex emergencies,

Emphasizing the importance of international cooperation in support of the efforts of affected States in dealing with natural disasters and complex emergencies in all their phases,

Recognizing that special attention should be given to women as well as the most vulnerable, including children, older persons and persons with disabilities, as well as victims of terrorism,

Welcoming the efforts made by the United Nations system to strengthen the consolidated appeals process as a coordination and strategic planning tool for the provision of humanitarian assistance and transition from relief to development,

Noting with concern that, while the consolidated appeals process remains one of the most significant mechanisms for humanitarian resource mobilization, it has suffered consistent shortfalls and, in this regard, encouraging the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat to continue to examine in greater depth the reasons for and implications of this,

Taking note of the assessment by the Secretary-General regarding criminal activities in the context of complex emergencies in pursuit of economic gain including, inter alia, illicit use by armed groups of natural resources and trafficking of women and children, and expressing concern over their impact on humanitarian assistance in such emergencies,

Bearing in mind that reaching the vulnerable is essential for providing adequate protection and assistance in contexts of natural disasters and complex emergencies as well as for strengthening local capacity to cope with humanitarian needs in such contexts,

Welcoming the Inter-Agency Standing Committee policy statement on the integration of a gender perspective in humanitarian affairs and stressing the importance of its effective implementation,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;[3]

2. *Invites* the Secretary-General to continue to strengthen the capacities of and consult with, where appropriate, regional and subregional organizations so as to respond to complex humanitarian crises and natural disasters and to report to the Economic and Social Council on practical steps taken in this regard;

3. *Welcomes* the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme to strengthen their coordination and regional activities so as to provide

[3] A/57/77-E/2002/63.

more effective support to disaster-prone countries and, to this end, calls on them, and other relief organizations and institutions to identify innovative ways to support those countries in building and, where necessary, strengthening local, national and regional capacities in disaster prevention, mitigation and management;

4. *Recalls* the efforts of the Emergency Relief Coordinator to expand participation in United Nations disaster assessment and coordination teams and encourages the further participation of United Nations organizations in United Nations disaster assessment coordination;

5. *Stresses* the continued need and relevance of integrating a gender perspective in the development and implementation of humanitarian assistance activities throughout all their phases and in prevention and recovery strategies;

6. *Calls upon* United Nations country teams in consultation with and in support of Governments to promote contingency planning for possible risks related to complex emergencies or natural disasters;

7. *Encourages* States that have not signed or ratified the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations,[4] adopted at Tampere, Finland, on 18 June 1998, to consider doing so;

8. *Encourages* humanitarian agencies to engage in the further strengthening of humanitarian information centres, by providing timely and accurate information on assessed needs, and the activities developed to respond to them;

9. *Calls upon* the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as well as the United Nations Development Programme, in consultation with Governments and the humanitarian and development community, with the support of international financial institutions where appropriate, to develop humanitarian strategies to support the engagement of local communities and institutions as a means of supporting humanitarian assistance activities and the transition from relief to development;

10. *Calls upon* Governments, when providing guidance to the United Nations system, including the agencies, funds and programmes through their governing bodies, to articulate areas of responsibility in addressing the transition from relief to development;

11. *Calls upon* Member States to support the incorporation and operationalization of disaster risk management analysis into humanitarian assistance activities, poverty eradication and sustainable development strategies;

12. *Urges* the United Nations system to strengthen and align its existing planning tools such as the consolidated appeals process and, where they exist, common country assessments and the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks in order to facilitate the transition from relief to development and to better reflect disaster risk management;

13. *Requests* the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, other members of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, affected countries and other partners concerned to ensure that consolidated appeals contain adequate plans to align relief and transitional programmes, inter alia, in the area of resource mobilization;

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[4] United Nations Treaty registration No. 27688.

14. *Takes note* of its decision to consider creating ad hoc advisory groups to examine the humanitarian and economic needs of African countries emerging from conflict and encourages relevant parts of the United Nations system, including existing coordination structures and mechanisms, to cooperate with such ad hoc advisory groups;

15. *Encourages* further strengthening of the consolidated appeals process as a coordination and strategic planning tool and urges donors to contribute to this objective and to address priority needs identified through the process, and also urges affected countries to reflect these priorities in their national efforts;

16. *Supports* the efforts of the Emergency Relief Coordinator to engage in a dialogue with other humanitarian actors, including non-governmental organizations, on strengthening their involvement in the development of common humanitarian action plans and consolidated appeals and encourages them to contribute actively to their implementation;

17. *Calls upon* United Nations organizations to continue to improve needs assessment methodologies in the consolidated appeals process and to strengthen efforts to report on results;

18. *Encourages* donors to ensure that financing of high-profile emergencies does not come at the expense of low-profile emergency appeals, inter alia, by making efforts to increase the overall levels of humanitarian assistance;

19. *Welcomes* the initiative of donors to meet and consider the global trend in humanitarian response to ensure that imbalances can be addressed when consolidated appeals are launched;

20. *Encourages* the development of a global humanitarian financial tracking system in order to contribute to improved coordination and accountability, and requests the Emergency Relief Coordinator to make proposals, without delay, for a comprehensive system for the collection and dissemination of data on humanitarian needs and contributions;

21. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law;

22. *Calls upon* all Governments and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflicts and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel in order to allow them to perform efficiently their task of assisting the affected population, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

23. *Reaffirms* the obligation of Member States to protect civilians in armed conflict in accordance with international humanitarian law and invites them to promote a culture of protection, taking into account the particular needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;

24. *Urges* the international community and the United Nations system to strengthen their humanitarian and other assistance to civilians under foreign occupation;

25. *Encourages* efforts to provide education during and after humanitarian emergencies in order to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development;

26. *Invites* Member States and other partners, as appropriate, to participate actively in workshops on the protection of civilians in order to impart knowledge and improve practice based on shared experiences;

27. *Encourages* Governments, the United Nations system and humanitarian organizations to share experiences and lessons they may have learned with regard to the development of criteria and procedures for the identification of armed elements and their separation from the civilian population in situations of complex emergencies and urges Governments and relevant United Nations bodies to strengthen measures in this regard;

28. *Notes with appreciation* the establishment of the non-operational inter-agency Unit on Internal Displacement in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and encourages Member States and relevant agencies to provide it with the necessary resources to enable it to carry out its activities;

29. *Notes* that an increasing number of States, United Nations organizations and regional and non-governmental organizations are making use of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement,[5] encourages the strengthening of legal frameworks on the protection of internally displaced persons and urges the international community to strengthen its support to affected States in their efforts to provide, through national plans or initiatives, protection and assistance to their internally displaced persons;

30. *Strongly urges* the United Nations system and all humanitarian organizations to adopt and implement appropriate measures, including codes of conduct, for all personnel involved in humanitarian assistance activities, to review protection and distribution mechanisms, and to recommend actions that protect against sexual abuse and exploitation and the misuse of humanitarian assistance and requests the Secretary-General to report back to the Council in this regard;

31. *Welcomes* efforts to strengthen international urban search and rescue operations through, inter alia, activities of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group;

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue progress on the directories referred to in General Assembly resolution 56/103 of 14 December 2001;

33. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to reflect the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution in his next report to the Council and the General Assembly on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

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[5] E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2.